

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 107860 TOSEC 040219
ORIGIN PA-02

INFO OCT-01 PRS-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 /019 R

DRAFTED BY PA:JCHAMBERLAIN:JC
APPROVED BY PA/M:CWFREEMAN
S/S :SGOLDSMITH
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
PA, S/S, S/PRS

-----121852Z 068700 /50
O 121827Z MAY 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 107860 TOSEC 040219

FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT WILLIAM BRANIGAN COLUMN WASHINGTON POST THURSDAY MAY 12 HEADED "IRAN CUTS SENTENCES FOR 11 IN 'SHOW' TRIAL."
2. TEHRAN, IRAN--IN A SHOW OF LENIENCY APPARENTLY INTENDED TO COUNTER CRITICISM OF HUMAN-RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, A MILITARY APPEALS COURT TODAY REDUCED THE PRISON SENTENCES OF 11 IRANIANS CONVICTED LAST MONTH OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES.
3. THE VERDICTS, WHICH HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED, CAME AFTER A TWO-DAY APPEAL HEARING. SOME FOREIGN OBSERVERS SAID THE OUTCOME APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN DECIDED BEFORE THE 10 MEN AND ONE WOMAN APPEARED IN AN UNUSUAL PUBLIC TRIAL.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 107860 TOSEC 040219

4. THE DEFENDANTS, ALL BUT ONE OF THEM UNIVERSITY-EDUCATED, APPEARED CALM AND EVEN BORED DURING THE APPEAL, AS THEY HAD DURING THEIR TRIAL A MONTH AGO.
5. LOOKING RELAXED, THEY JOKED IN AN ANTEROOM BEFORE TODAY'S SESSION. IN COURT, THEY SHOWED NO REACTION AS A

READER ANNOUNCED REDUCTIONS IN THE SENTENCES OF THREE MEN FROM LIFE TO 10 YEARS AND CUTS BY GENERALLY MORE THAN HALF IN THE TERMS OF THE OTHERS.

6. EIGHT OF THE DEFENDANTS IMMEDIATELY TOLD COURT OFFICIALS THEY WOULD APPEAL THE VERDICTS FURTHER. SHAH MOHAMMED REZA PAHLAVI MUST RULE ON WHETHER NEW APPEALS CAN BE MADE. IF HE APPROVES, THE CASE WILL GO TO IRAN'S SUPREME COURT.

7. SOME FOREIGN OBSERVERS SAID THE SHOW OF LENIENCY WAS LARGELY COSMETIC RATHER THAN A SIGNAL OF ANY PROFOUND CHANGE IN IRAN'S TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT TEHRAN STARTING FRIDAY.

8. SO FAR, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS AVOIDED ANY COMMENT ON HUMAN-RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN IRAN, A MAJOR PURCHASER OF U.S. MILITARY HARDWARE AND CONSIDERED STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT.

9. DEFENSE ARGUMENTS, IN BOTH THE TRIAL AND THE APPEAL, MAINLY INCLUDED PLEAS FOR MERCY COMBINED WITH CONFESSIONS OF GUILT BY ASSOCIATION WITH COMMUNIST AND LEFTIST GROUPS. THE DEFENDANTS ALL CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN LED ASTRAY BY FOREIGN ELEMENTS HOSTILE TO IRAN.

10. THEIR CONFESSIONS WERE FIRST MADE DURING PRETRIAL UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 107860 TOSEC 040219

INTERROGATION BY SAVAK, THE FEARED IRANIAN SECRET POLICE. NEITHER THE MILITARY TRIBUNALS NOR THE COURT-SELECTED DEFENSE LAWYERS EVER TRIED TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE CONFESSIONS, ON WHICH THE INITIAL GUILTY PLEAS WERE BASED, RESULTED FROM THREATS, FEAR OR COERCION DURING THE INTERROGATIONS.

11. A LOCAL NEWSPAPER SAID THE PROSECUTION'S EVIDENCE AGAINST THE DEFENDANTS ALSO INCLUDED "INVESTIGATIONS BY SAVAK INTO THEIR ACTIVITIES IN IRAN AND ABROAD." THIS CONFIRMS EARLIER REPORTS OF SURVEILLANCE BY SAVAK AGENTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE, WHERE MOST OF THE ACCUSED STUDIED.

12. FOREIGN LEGAL OBSERVERS DURING LAST MONTH'S TRIAL SAID, AFTER INTERVIEWING THE DEFENDANTS, THAT NONE HAD EVER RECEIVED THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM IN WRITING. SOME WERE EITHER NOT INFORMED OF THE LAW UNDER WHICH THEY WERE ACCUSED OR NOT ALLOWED TO SEE A LAWYER FOR WEEKS OR

MONTHS AFTER THEY WERE ARRESTED LATE LAST YEAR.

13. OBSERVERS AT THE TRIAL, INCLUDING TWO LAWYERS FROM
BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES, SAID THEY FELT THAT
SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE CASE AMOUNTED TO HUMAN-RIGHTS
VIOLATIONS. (END TEXT.) CHRISTOPHER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE107860
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JCHAMBERLAIN:JC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770168-0020
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770564/aaaacdjy.tel
Line Count: 122
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 51c7b695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2546003
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS MATERIAL
TAGS: OVIP, SOPN, PGOV, PINS, US, IR, WASHINGTON POST, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (BRANIGAN, WILLIAM)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/51c7b695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009